

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JUNE 30, 2000

DOMENICI SECURES \$5 MILLION “HIGH SCHOOLS AT COMMUNITY COLLEGE” PLAN

Senator Approves FY 2001 Education Funding Bill

WASHINGTON -- U.S. Senator Pete Domenici today reported that the Senate has approved \$5 million in initial funding to begin his “High Schools in Community Colleges” program, a new effort to provide vocational opportunities to students.

Domenici, an Appropriations Committee member, said the Senate today approved the **FY2001 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education (Labor-HHS) Appropriations Bill**, which includes the \$5 million for the program, begun by Domenici in 1998. The funding bill will next be considered by a conference committee set to reconcile differences in the Senate and House-passed versions of the bill.

“The specific thrust of this program is simple - to bring educators and employers together to offer high school students the skills they need in both academic and vocational areas with practical work-based learning,” Domenici said.

“I believe this is an innovative approach to opening vocational opportunities to our students, and giving them a head start on the types of academic and vocational skills they need to secure a good job once they graduate,” he said.

The program, created by Domenici within the federal Vocational and Adult Education Tech-Prep program, will allow consortia of local schools, community colleges, and employers to utilize grant funds to locate these high schools directly at community colleges where many vocational programs are already taught.

Under the “High Schools at Community Colleges” program, a consortium would have to contain a business partner to take an active role in ensuring that graduating students possess the tools and knowledge they will need to succeed. The business partner will also act as a gateway for student and teacher internships and provide students a head start in obtaining jobs.

“Student attendance at a high school located in a community college will be voluntary, but many students have already decided that a vocationally-based career is their choice and even now are taking these classes,” Domenici said. “This linkage will pace a natural path to at least a two-year degree by these students.”

Domenici also praised the approval of \$62.5 million, an increase of \$20.25 million above 2000, for the Department of Education’s Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI) program. The HSI program provides resources for universities and community schools that have large Hispanic student enrollments to improve their curriculum and Hispanic student retention. There are 17 New Mexico schools designated as HSIs.

HSI funding is provided under Title V of the Higher Education Act, to help two- and four-year HSI schools develop curricula, purchase books and equipment, renovate and improve facilities, develop faculty, and other activities to strengthen the programs at HSIs. New Mexico has received a total of \$8.8 million in HSI funds since the program’s continuing grants began in 1995. Included in that figure were two grants awarded in 1999 totaling \$1.2 million.

There are nearly 24,000 Hispanic college students at the 17 New Mexico colleges and universities designated as HSIs, which include: Albuquerque Technical Vocational Institute, College of Santa Fe, College of the Southwest-Hobbs, Eastern New Mexico University-Roswell, Luna Vocational Technical Institute-Las Vegas, New Mexico Highlands University-Las Vegas, New Mexico Junior College-Hobbs, New Mexico State University (NMSU) Las Cruces, NMSU-Carlsbad, NMSU-Doña Ana, NMSU-Grants, Northern New Mexico Community College-Española, Santa Fe Community College, University of New Mexico (UNM)-Los Alamos, UNM-Taos Education Center, UNM-Valencia County Branch, and Western New Mexico University-Silver City.

The following New Mexico-related projects were also funding in the FY2001 Labor-HHS Appropriations Bill, as requested by Domenici:

Character Education: \$12.3 million provided, an increase of \$5 million above the 2000 level, to be targeted to youth violence prevention initiatives;

Hantavirus Research: \$3.5 million through the Centers for Disease Control for Hantavirus research nationwide, with Domenici-requested language strongly encouraging that a portion of these funds be used for a New Mexico Hantavirus initiative to educate the public and medical personnel on the prevention of the disease. The cost of the proposed education project is \$761,000 and would be implemented by the Navajo Division of Health which treats the most at-risk population (\$701,000) in cooperation with the Department of Health (\$60,000).

Tribal Colleges: \$10 million for Tribal Colleges, an increase of \$4 million above 2000 and \$1 million over the president's request; and \$5.6 million for Tribally-controlled post-secondary vocational institutions which includes Crownpoint Institute of Technology (CIT), a \$1 million increase.

Indian Education Programs: \$115.5 million for Indian education programs, an increase of \$38.5 million above 2000. This includes \$92.8 million for grants to local education agencies (+ \$30.8 million), and \$20 million for special programs for Indian children (+ \$6.7 million), and \$2.7 million for national activities (+ \$1.0 million).

Hispanic Serving Institutions: \$62.5 million, an increase of \$20.25 million above 2000 and the same as the president's request.